

Convention and Tourism Advisory Committee
Tuesday, May 2, 2006 – Minutes

Members Present: Gerald Cook, Marlene Leister, Bette Timmel, Dave Miller, Kathy Tolbert

Members Absent: Jennifer Sturges, Don Marrs, Ben Vidricksen, Tricia Weems

Guests/Staff Present: Keith Rawlings – Salina Bicentennial Center; Mike Harmon – Best Western Mid America Inn; Sylvia Rice, Tiffany Benien, Jo Ann McClure, Andi Pahl – Chamber Staff

Minutes

The Minutes of the April 2006 meeting were reviewed.

Financial Statement

The March Financial Statement was reviewed.

Division Updates:

Sports Market

Tiffany reported on the following sports events:

- **Triple Crown Sports** – TCS will hold two tournaments in Salina this summer: May 5-6 and June 2-3. Originally they had also scheduled a state tournament June 23-24, which due to franchise conflicts was cancelled. Thirty teams are signed up for this weekend, including 5-6 teams from Salina. Games will be played at Bill Burke Park and East Crawford Recreation Area. Next month's tournament is the Kansas Classic. Representatives of TCS have stated that they would like to see Salina become a state tournament site in the future.
- **KSHSAA 4A State Baseball and Softball** – The State baseball and softball tournaments will be held at Dean Evans Stadium and Bill Burke Park May 26-27 this year. We are in the process of recruiting volunteers for these events.
- **Sports Event Symposium** – Tiffany attended the national Sports Event Symposium for sports event planners in Lexington, KY April 18-20. There were approximately 500 in attendance. Most event right holders were looking for locations larger than Salina. Tiffany met with six organizations for 10 minutes each. The National Amateur Baseball Association and the National Softball Association, which are both interested in Kansas, but may have conflicts with our other baseball/softball tournaments. The NCAA is looking for soccer facilities. Tiffany spoke with the Pop Warner Little Scholars for cheerleading and dance that may be a good fit for entertainment at NJCAA next March. The National Soccer Association and the American Volleyball Association are unfortunately looking for larger places. The educational sessions were interesting and informative. John Disney, the next NESC Chairman, was one of the keynote speakers. Tiffany also reported on survey numbers regarding events and participants of the \$4.92 billion sporting events industry.

Convention Market

Jo Ann gave the following convention update:

- Jo Ann made contact with 15 event planners at The Reunion Network trade show in Branson, MO March 22-25.
- The Affordable Meetings Expo in Chicago March 28-31 netted Jo Ann 65 contacts at the Meet Kansas booth and she received four very hot leads out of those. She is following up on those leads.
- Jo Ann attended the KMCPI conference in Overland Park April 12-13. She met with meeting planners from that area. A highlight was Kitty Ratcliffe, the keynote speaker from the New Orleans CVB who talked about all the rescheduling of events due to Hurricane Katrina.
- Jo Ann made some contacts on a recent trip to Topeka for the Kansas Grain & Feed convention that said they would be coming to Salina in 2007. We are waiting on a contract from them. The Insurance Agents have also signed for 2007.
- Jo Ann announced that the PETS/SETS convention and the State Altrusa convention are coming up in May.
- Sylvia and Jo Ann will be attending a meeting of the Meet Kansas coalition in Manhattan this month where they will be discussing issues of the new web site.

Tourism Market

Sylvia gave the following tourism market update:

- **Tour Kansas** – The Kansas West Showcase FAM tour of April 24-28 consisted of 14 operators from Kansas, Texas, Nebraska, Oklahoma, and California. Their plans were to do a driving tour of downtown Salina and visit

Rolling Hills Wildlife Adventure, Smoky Hill Vineyards & Winery and the Smoky Hill Bison Company before departing for Lindsborg. Due to inclement weather, the trip to Smoky Hill Bison Company had to be cancelled. So far we received one confirmed booking for July and there is an operator from Nebraska who is interested.

- Tourism Ads – In May, an ad will go in the *Kansas City Star* and *Frommer's Budget Travel*. We are also doing a co-op ad with Hays and Hutchinson to be placed in the *National Geographic Traveler* highlighting Rolling Hills Wildlife Adventure, Sternberg Museum and the new Underground Salt Museum. Ads are also being placed in *Midwest Living*, *Whitetail Journal* and the *Kansas City Star*. The Wild West Kansas group is putting together a golf ad.
- Kansas Sampler Festival – The Kansas Sampler Festival will be held in Garden City May 6-7. Sylvia and Andi will be attending. Smoky Hill Vineyards & Winery will also have a booth. This trade show is primarily for the leisure travel market with some group planners from banks, and other agencies.
- See America Week – National Tourism Week, now called See America Week, will be observed May 13-21. Staff will be delivering snacks to the hotels on Monday then sending daily faxes of tourism trivia questions, messages about customer service and travel and tourism facts. Prizes will be awarded to winners from drawings at the end of the week.
- Smoky Hill River Festival – Staff is mailing out River Festival brochures to attractions, CVBs, TICs, etc. across the state.
- Other Items – Sylvia will be attending the NTA conference in November and the ABA conference in Grapevine, TX in January 2007. The Smith Travel Research numbers were very strong for March. RevPAR was up 13% compared to 2005. Work continues on the Chamber web site's calendar of events so that soon outside entities will be able to list their own calendars.

Mike Harmon announced that the annual Run for the Wall motorcycle event would be at Thomas Park May 21.

Kathy Tolbert reported the traveling exhibit for the Earl Bane Gallery is "Married to Adventure: The Marvin & Osa Johnson Story," which is on display through July. Kathy also stated that Rolling Hills Wildlife Adventure will not be attending the Kansas Sampler Festival this year but are instead attending the three-day Buy Kansas show in Kansas City. Russell's Greenhouse is sponsoring a free potted plant event on Mother's Day at Rolling Hills and other events are planned. Kathy also announced that she would be on Kansas Live May 15.

Bette Timmel gave a report on the Smoky Hill Museum gallery-reopening event where more than 2,000 people attended. Lots of families attended and enjoyed the food and music. She praised John Highkin for a great job. Bette said that the Museum plans to change exhibits every six months.

Keith Rawlings gave an update on events coming to the Salina Bicentennial Center including the Kansas Methodist Church West Conference, Kansas Cagerz basketball games and the Salina Prayer Breakfast. The Kansas Strongman event has cancelled. Keith said construction in Heritage Hall continues and is hoping for completion this month.

Sylvia announced that Abner Perney has been selected to represent Mayor Don Marrs at the Convention & Tourism Advisory Committee meetings.

Next Meeting

The next Convention & Tourism Advisory Committee Meeting will be held June 6 at the Chamber.

Upcoming Events

Upcoming meetings, conventions and events were noted.

The meeting adjourned at 8:25am.